

Safrea's transition to new media pays off

Amid Covid-19, South Africa's freelance creatives used lockdown to pivot into 'new media' - surprisingly unfamiliar terrain for many seasoned creatives - and the work is now paying off.



When the global Covid-19 pandemic hit our shores, freelancers were impacted hard, with many creatives losing long-term retainer work and contracts.

Instead of merely waiting for the storm to pass, creatives of the Southern African Freelancers' Association (Safrea) took a leap of faith. A new online publication was launched, the *Safrea MediaHub*, formerly known as the *Safrea Chronicle*.

According to Niki Moore, founding member and editor of the *Safrea MediaHub*, "The pandemic hastened the demise of 'traditional' media and forced the most experienced of our freelance creatives to learn new skills. They needed to remain relevant and competitive in the media industry. I believe new media is the future of all journalism and it is part of an irreversible process. Creatives, journalists and media practitioners use these new skills to understand how to optimise digital technologies in their line of work."

A year since launching, and with many lessons learnt, the online media platform recently rebranded to Safrea MediaHub. In addition to the website, there is a subscriber-based newsletter.

Moore emphasises that the "Safrea MediaHub was established to showcase and promote the work of Safrea members and to add value to their professional competencies."

Safrea MediaHub professionals create and/or curate content across copy, visual and sound media. In addition, the online platform acts as a conduit for professional development and mentoring. It enables freelancers to explore new ideas in a comfortable digital environment.

In April 2021, the Safrea MediaHub ventured into the social media platforms Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter. “For many of our creatives, this has largely been an untapped learning and support resource. Importantly, freelancers are successfully using the publication and social media to build their personal brands and market their services,” adds Moore.

For more, go to www.safreachronicle.co.za

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